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SATURDAY
JUNE 20, 1953

I went to see Paul Van Zeeland this morning at the Foreign Office, an old-fashioned building on Rue de la Loi where most of the ministries are located.

He told me [redacted] he had carefully reconsidered the situation regarding ratification of the EDC and thought there was an outside chance he could pull it off. He considered one [redacted] important end had been achieved in the debates to date -- his own, the Liberal and the Socialist Parties were all agreed on the fundamental principles of the Treaty and considered it "useful and necessary". Yet a favorable vote by the Lower Chamber was being delayed by a struggle between the various parties over issues of domestic politics, since they were jockeying for position in anticipation of the next election. He, Van Zeeland, had made all the concessions [redacted] it was possible for him to grant and still maintain the support of his own party. He had always wanted a really national majority but since the Socialists were intransigent he would accept a majority given by his own and the Liberal Party. However, the Liberals had stated they would not pass on the treaty before the summer recess of Parliament. In a last effort to secure their support for an early vote, he would on Tuesday lay before the Belgian Parliament his final offer regarding constitutional revision. If the Liberals would not accept it there was nothing more he could do to satisfy them short of letting them, as an opposition group, dictate Government policy, which was of course impossible.

After leaving him, I met with Camille Gutt, de Staercke, and Liebaert, leader of the Liberal Party. We did our best ~~to persuade Liebaert that~~ urgent and favorable action by the Liberal Party was in the best interests of all concerned, which got us into a rather metaphysical but perhaps helpful argument. I do not know what the result may be. I propose to go, if the Department has

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no objection, to Brussels again next week and meet some Liberals whom Gutt will gather together, and also separately see Buset, the Socialist leader.

I left Brussels, with Eugène driving the Pontiac station wagon, at 2:15 p.m. for my rendezvous with Hallstein. We ran into a bicycle race and two separate Belgian customs establishments, out at 6:30 arrived on the German frontier where Walter Hallstein met me. From there we made an erratic trip over winding country roads and paths for an hour to a hunting lodge in the middle of a forest at an altitude of 600 metres. It, together with hunting rights on about 38,000 acres, belongs to the German General Electric Company. Hallstein and I took a long walk in the course of which we saw three fine stags with excellent heads. In pens near the lodge were terriers -- used for boar hunting -- wild boars, turkeys, pheasants, ducks, pigeons, and one young red fox.

We dined well at 9:30 and talked until after midnight about European integration and German domestic problems.

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